

Evolving practice in VACiS: A scan of the literature

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Summary

More than a billion children face violence each year. Schools are an important, but still underused, site to prevent that violence. There are campaigns and programmes to address violence in schools. They are still too few in number, and they are mainly designed and often implemented in the Global North. Though important examples of good practice exist, there are still few dedicated national or global institutions, and compared to other education priorities, they receive little funding.

Raising Voices has now been working on violence against children for 15 years. As the global movement to prevent violence against children advances, we see this as a moment - alongside existing networks - to highlight innovations and voices from the Global South. We mean to build a Southern-led global agenda to end violence against children in schools. We believe this Southern lens, and this focus on Southern challenges, will yield new answers.

This report supports us in building that global agenda, by reflecting on the current state of the movement. We examine its historical development, describe the principles, theories of change and evidenced impact of major programmes, and highlight gaps and opportunities.

Historical development: We now agree that the prevention of violence against children is both necessary and possible - when we work to change systems and address the whole school. That was not always the case. In previous decades, children have been viewed at most as semi-rights holders, protected by paternalistic professionals

addressing single incidences of violence. In progressing towards prevention through systems, we were aided by a renewed focus on education quality, and by an increasing wealth of evidence about prevalence. Vital leadership has come from UNICEF, USAID, and especially the Know Violence Global Learning Initiative. We now have consensus tools like the INSPIRE strategies, and several new programmes, shown to work through rigorous evaluations in the developing world. Together, these are the fruits and the fuel of this movement.

Current programmes: A huge number of prevention programmes exist, but there are still few programmes documented, evidenced or tailored to the Global South. Most programmes that do exist focus on education and skills for children. More work to prevent peer violence and bullying - the violence faced in the North. Fewer concentrate on adult to child violence. There are not many comprehensive programmes tackling many types of violence at once.

Successful programmes: Most current programmes have not

learned lessons from the most successful programmes. That represents a missed opportunity. Successful programmes improve schools' operational culture and take a whole-school approach. They create meaningful roles and spaces for children to speak and act. They provide support to teachers, but they also go beyond the school to engage with a wider system of violence. They focus on long term implementation, they collect data, and they adapt to local contexts.

Gaps and opportunities:

When so many children still face violence, we know there is a long way still to go. We believe that the sector should do more to address systems, and engage with those that have the power to effect change. We know we need to learn how to scale and sustain successful programmes, and how to reliably adapt them for the developing world. When resources are scarce, we believe the sector must be much clearer about the costs and benefits of different programmes. All this must be harnessed to a steady, urgent commitment to raise up children's voices and advance children's rights.

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Background

There is an urgent duty to prevent violence against children. There is now more discussion of the issue, but there is still too little debate about schools as a particularly opportune place to prevent that violence. In many countries, the issue lacks an agency to 'own' the issue, and there are fewer dedicated funding sources for this locus of violence than for many other categories of violence against children. Raising Voices has been working on these issues for more than 15 years, and has made great progress in putting violence against children in schools at the heart of the debate in Uganda. Now, we want to take stock, and prepare to convene new voices worldwide.

There are many important existing networks making vital progress, including the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, UNICEF's Global Partnership to End SRGBV and the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. We hope to enhance their work, and continue the work of the Know Violence network, by convening new voices who have faced the challenges of leading evidence-based programmes, especially in the Global South. Together, those voices can help build and propel a global agenda for preventing VACiS.

In commencing that work, Raising Voices has examined evolving practice in the sector to address the following topics:

a) issue framing and historical development, b) key research that informs the debate and recommended reading, c) identification of thought leaders, d) principles, theories of change and evidenced impact of major programmes, and e) gaps and opportunities.

We have examined existing literature published in peer reviewed journals as well as programmatic and informal documents published by practitioners, with a view to grounding our approach and investment in the context of what is known and where the opportunities are.



Conclusions and learnings

Issue framing and historical development

Raising Voices has now been working on VACiS for more than 15 years. In that time, we have seen great changes in the

prominence and framing of this issue. In this section, we are taking stock of how the debate has evolved. This provides crucial

context for the discussion later in this report of what we have learned and where we might go next.

Defining violence against children

Our definition of violence against children follows the WHO. The WHO's definition of interpersonal violence in general encompasses "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation" (Butchart et al, 2016).

There is extensive debate about the proper definition of violence against children. That is further complicated by the presence of many competing terms encompassing different types of violence, each of them also under-defined (RTI, 2016; Smith et al, 2002). Academics tend to favour narrower definitions that can be more precisely measured.

Activist groups like Raising Voices tend to prefer more comprehensive definitions, which ensure that no type of violence is excluded and which capture the ways children talk about violence.

We extend the WHO definition in several ways. Anyone aged under 18 is a child. Raising Voices categorises violence into four types: physical, sexual, economic, and emotional, and includes acts of omission. Children say that violence is the things adults do that make them feel bad, in the context of specific environments and relationships, rather than on specific acts (Naker, 2005).

We therefore offer the following definition of violence against children in school:

"Violence against children in school is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation, which use physical, emotional, sexual or economic means, and which are perpetrated by those who encounter the child through educational institutions."



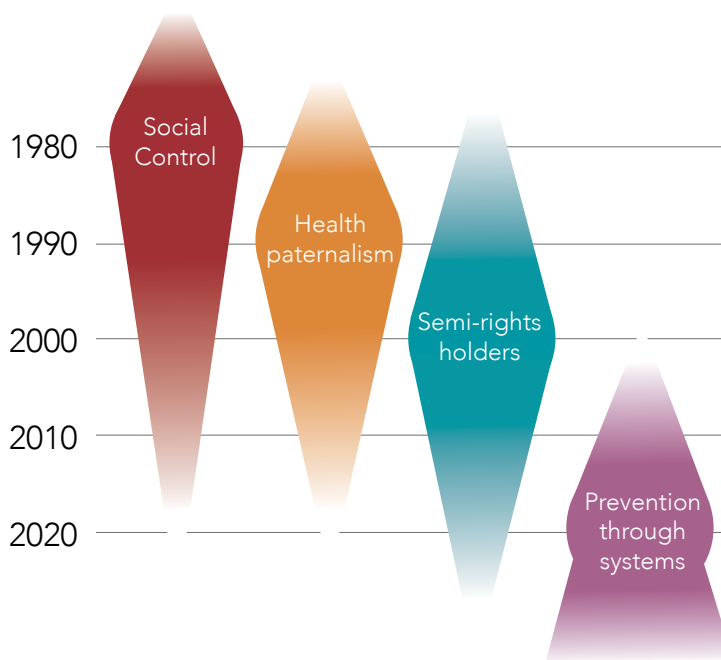


In the modern history of preventing violence against children, we have observed four phases: social control, health paternalism, semi-rights holders, and prevention through systems. Each of those phases has been marked by different ideas about power relations.

From social control to health paternalism: Before the 1980s, most papers and programmes focused on protecting society against

criminal violence committed by *children*. This phase of social control was marked by terms like 'delinquency' and 'hooligan' (see for instance Olson-Raymer, 1983). Having been much discussed from 1960 to the early 1970s, mentions of juvenile delinquency in English language literature reduced sharply over the course of the 1970s (Google Ngram, 2019). Schools were only one site of violence to be studied, among many. The creation of the hugely influential Olweus bullying programme in 1983 (Olweus &

Limber, 1983) marked a transition to a phase of health-focused paternalism concentrated in schools, with benevolent teachers, parents and child protection workers intervening to prevent violence *among* children, or to protect them from a small number of *deviant adults* (see for instance, Winters & Easton, 1983). Major sexual abuse education programmes, such as Talking about Touching and Red Flag/ Green Flag, were also introduced (see for instance Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 1988).




Children gradually become semi-rights holders: In the third phase children became “semi-rights holders” (Naker, 2017) who merit at least some protection against violence committed by adults and the wider society. It was tentatively heralded by the 1990 ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but only really got underway from the early 2000s (see for instance, Zwi et al, 2007). The education sector embraced the idea of conducive cultures

of learning earlier, drawing on a long tradition of research into school climate (Thapa et al, 2013); child protection agencies retained a focus on individual cases and causes for longer (Davidson, 1999). A fourth phase began in the mid-2010s, with a growing consensus that prevention is necessary and possible, if we look at systems. Below, we describe the narratives and work that marked transition through the third and into the fourth phases.

An uneven transition into focusing on prevention through systems: This simple narrative - of crime, to health, to rights, to systemic prevention - is certainly oversimplified, and the evolution of narratives have been uneven. Different groups have adjusted their views at different rates. NGOs and researchers have advocated for a rights-based approach for many years. States and schools have moved much more slowly, with education sectors engaging in separate





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debates to those in child protection (Williams, 2004). Public attitudes towards children, their rights, and violence, vary hugely around the world (Harris & Nandakumar, 2017; Pells & Morrow, 2017). In particular, there are huge differences between the Global North and South in the resources available; in 2016, spending per primary student in the UK was \$11,401, compared to \$137 in Pakistan (UIS Statistics, 2019). In well-resourced school systems, teachers are closely monitored, and there are comprehensive systems of child protection. Cases of violence by adults against children are therefore rarer. A literature dominated by research on the Global North often fails to grapple with resource constraints; in Ttofi & Farrington's 2011 review, just 1 of 53 bullying programme evaluations including a cost-effectiveness calculation. That literature has a concomitant focus on violence between children.

Even as the debate evolved about children's rights, major changes were happening in global education. The first human development report was released in 1990. UNESCO's Education for All initiative also began in 1990, with a focus on quantitative targets for the number of children in schools. That continued with the Millennium Development Goals. Even as developed countries were focusing on bullying, with many US states passing laws in the 1990s (Bradshaw, 2015), the global development sector focused on numbers (Barrett, 2011). At that time, there was little attention and

less cash for efforts to improve education quality, and still less for the specific issue of violence against children in schools.

Yet individual organisations were working on violence against children, and viewing it through the prism of child rights - with some looking specifically at schools. With many civil society actors already taking this approach, multilateral organisations joined in. UNICEF began working on the Child Friendly Schools initiative from the mid-1990s. The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children was founded in 2001. The landmark UN Study on violence against children was commissioned in 2002, and reported in 2006 (Pinheiro, 2006). That finally ushered in the fourth phase: prevention through systems.

Progress in the last decade: In 2008, Jones et al surveyed efforts to prevent violence against children in schools in the developing world. Their report serves as a snapshot of the situation at the beginning of the fourth phase. The authors noted quite a few programmes in Africa, some in Latin America, but few activities in South and East Asia. Jones and colleagues also offered three recommendations: establish credibility and awareness through research and communication; provide integrated state services and build the capacity of service providers; and promote a socially inclusive, rights-based and multi-stakeholder approach.



How much progress has been made in the decade since that report? Since then, there have been remarkable efforts along two lines: expanding the knowledge base and building consensus around prevention. Most notably, the Know Violence partnership, which ran from 2014-2018, brought together many of the most important researchers and actors. Know Violence led with a clear assertion that “prevention is possible”, and to that end published a landmark global report, as well as 44 additional papers and articles, and a special issue of the *Journal of Psychology, Health and Medicine*.

When it comes to building consensus, in parallel with Know Violence’s work, in 2016 ten major agencies endorsed the INSPIRE strategies for ending violence against children, and in the same year the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children was launched. UNICEF has become an important voice to prevent school-related gender-based violence. All of these agencies have sponsored research on the prevalence and risk factors of VACiS. There has been considerable growth in the number of prevention programmes in East and especially South Asia (see the section ‘Programmes overall’ below). Alongside all this, the Sustainable Development Goals have moved the conversation back to education quality, and have included specific targets on violence. Now, both USAID and DFID focus explicitly on education quality, and USAID has given considerable attention in recent years to VACiS.

There has also been a remarkable growth in the quantity of rigorous research into prevention programme design. In addition to the Good

School Toolkit, RCT experimental trials have been undertaken of programmes in the developing world such as the Irie Classroom Toolbox, SEHER, Interaction Competencies with Children for Teachers (ICC-T), Parivartan and Your Moment of Truth. However, the challenges of measuring violence have not gone away, and even as research designs have become more rigorous, work is ongoing to develop measures that are grounded in theory, less susceptible to bias and ethical in their approach (Barr et al, 2017; Leach, 2006).

Prevention programmes in the last decade have increasingly centred on holistic approaches which treat the whole school (Thapa et al, 2013), and regard schools as systems embedded in societies in which norms of violence, authority and discrimination may thrive (Alford & Derzon, 2013), rather than regarding children primarily as individual agents. That is the approach of our own Good School Toolkit, and the SEHER programme in Bihar, India, to give just two examples. Calls continue for governments to provide integrated services and for state agencies to communicate with one another (Know Violence, 2017). In some countries, there is little ownership of the issue of violence against children in schools by education ministries or by global funders (Naker, 2017). In other countries, a genuine desire to do better has not yet yielded effective implementation and enforcement of programmes at scale.

In the remainder of this report, we describe the research base and thought leaders, examine the principles, theories of change and evidence for prevention programmes, and describe the gaps and opportunities that still exist, in 2019.



Key research and recommended reading

There is now a vast amount of research on the issue of violence against children in schools; our initial review identified 1,344 sources. There are multiple systematic reviews and meta-analyses - and more than one systematic review of systematic reviews. Moreover, there are many interrelated lines of research that touch on the issues. Here, we highlight some of the key papers in each of these topics. Full references are provided at the foot of this report.

Overall agenda: In setting the overall agenda for violence against children, Pinheiro's 2006 '[United Nations Study on Violence against Children](#)' is naturally foundational. That provides initial work on risk and protective factors, impacts, and summarises the work of governments so far, with in-depth looks at the different specific settings in which children may face violence (including a section on violence in schools). Equally important in articulating the most recent research and consensus agenda is the 2017 report by [Know Violence in Childhood](#), an elegantly presented discussion of prevalence and impacts of violence, the places where it happens, strategies for action and the specific role of states. Also important is the comprehensive UNICEF review of prevalence data and public attitudes, '[Hidden in Plain Sight](#)' (Cappa & Wardlaw, 2014).

School culture, school climate and whole school approaches:

It is a consistent conclusion of the literature that to prevent VACiS, a whole school approach is vital. There is a 50-year literature on this, but most of the research is focused on the broader issue of school climates, and on the Global North. [Thapa et al \(2013\)](#) have provided a wide-ranging review of evidence and issues. [Anderson \(1982\)](#), provides a similar review of the early literature, while [Maslowski \(2006\)](#) has written about ways to categorise and measure school climate. Raising Voices prefers to talk about a school's operational culture (Naker, 2017), which is one (more controllable) element in wider school climate debate.

Bullying/peer violence: There have been very many reviews of research on bullying, since the publication of Olweus' foundational work ([Olweus, 1993](#)). Of the more recent

reviews, the most comprehensive and thoughtful is [Farrington & Ttofi \(2009\)](#). However, their work is in turn summarised more crisply by [Bradshaw \(2015\)](#). They find that anti-bullying programmes, on average, are associated with a 20-23% decrease in perpetration of bullying, and a 17%-20% decrease in victimization. Somewhat outdated now, but useful because of its stern evidentiary criteria, is the summary by [Smith et al \(2004\)](#). None of the reviews of bullying research focus on the Global South. Of the various repositories and libraries of programme summaries, the most useful is [Child Trends](#), a website with clear summaries of a very large number of programmes. Other similar summaries are available at the [Promising Practices Network on Children, Families and Communities](#).



Adult to children violence and corporal punishment:

[Gershoff's 2017](#) paper provides a review and reflection on the research into corporal punishment in schools, which covers definitions, legal statutes, prevalence and effects, and concludes with a brief discussion on prevention strategies. [The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children](#) provides regular updates of global progress on national statutes; their most recent report was released in January 2019.

School-related gender-based violence:

There is considerable research on violence in schools. [Leach et al \(2014\)](#) offer a vital overall survey of the evidence on occurrence and responses to SRGBV. [Hill et al \(2015\)](#) provide a crisply written review of existing school-based interventions for preventing VAWG that extracts general lessons and provides one-paragraph sketches of demonstrably effective, promising and emerging programmes, including several programmes from the Global South. [Jones et al \(2008\)](#) summarise the field and work in Africa, Asia and South America, providing a clarifying review and a valuable snapshot to see how far we have moved. Their report is a model for this research.

Violence outside of schools - Positive Youth Development and family support:

There is an extensive literature on programmes that work to prevent violence (and other outcomes) among youth and children, but without a particular focus on schools. [Alvarado et al's 2017](#) report provides very wide coverage of the evidence for a large number of youth-focused programmes under the broad theme of Positive Youth Development, including excellent appendices detailing programmes and summarising the field. Also relevant in this regard is [DuBois et al's 2011](#) meta-analysis of the successes of mentoring programmes in the United States. [Gitau et al \(2016\)](#) describe the learnings from the Parenting Africa Network. [Stanley et al \(2015\)](#) provide an extremely comprehensive review of evidence on domestic abuse prevention among children, including those identified through surveys and the grey literature. They apply strict evidentiary standards and a sceptical eye to a very wide range of programmes, especially in the UK. [Pearl \(2009\)](#) reviews parent management training programmes, for parents with preschool-age children. He describes the theory, activities and research outcomes of five major programmes. [Barrientos et al \(2014\)](#) review the research on cash transfer and social safety nets role in child protection.

Measurement:

There is extensive work reflecting on the methods and challenges of measuring violence against children in schools. [Fiona Leach \(2006\)](#) provided an early outline of the methodological and ethical challenges of doing so. [Godfrey et al \(2012\)](#) have reflected on measuring school climates. [Ttofi et al \(2014\)](#) provide an examination of the methods employed by the existing meta-analyses of bullying research, while RTI International have produced a valuable reflection on defining and measuring school-related gender-based violence ([RTI International, 2016](#)).

Individual evaluations:

A huge range of individual programmes have been evaluated, and many of them are discussed in the remainder of this report. We cannot describe all of them, but some of the most striking and methodologically interesting examples are the evaluation of SEHER in India ([Shinde et al, 2018](#)), the rigorous evaluation of Raising Voices' Good School Toolkit in Uganda ([DeVries et al, 2017](#)), [Baker-Henningham & Walker \(2018\)](#)'s evaluation of the Irie Classroom Toolkit in Jamaica, and in the United States, [Paluck et al's 2016](#) experimental evaluation of using social networks to reduce conflict in schools.





Principles, theories of change and evidenced impact of major programmes

We have profiled 303 programmes, of which 218 were school-based, drawing widely from across the many categories of programmes that address violence against children. The full list of programme profiles may be viewed [here](#). From these, we have taken a more in-depth look at programmes of major interest.

Programmes overall

We conclude that:

- A huge number of prevention programmes exist, but there are still few well-evidenced programmes in the Global South.
- Most documented programmes are based in the Global North, and few are attuned to resource-poor environments.
- Programmes often focus on education and skills for children and pupils, and on peer violence.
- Anti-bullying programmes are much more common than comprehensive programmes, and hardly any focus on economic violence.
- Approaches and priorities have varied by place, even within the Global South.

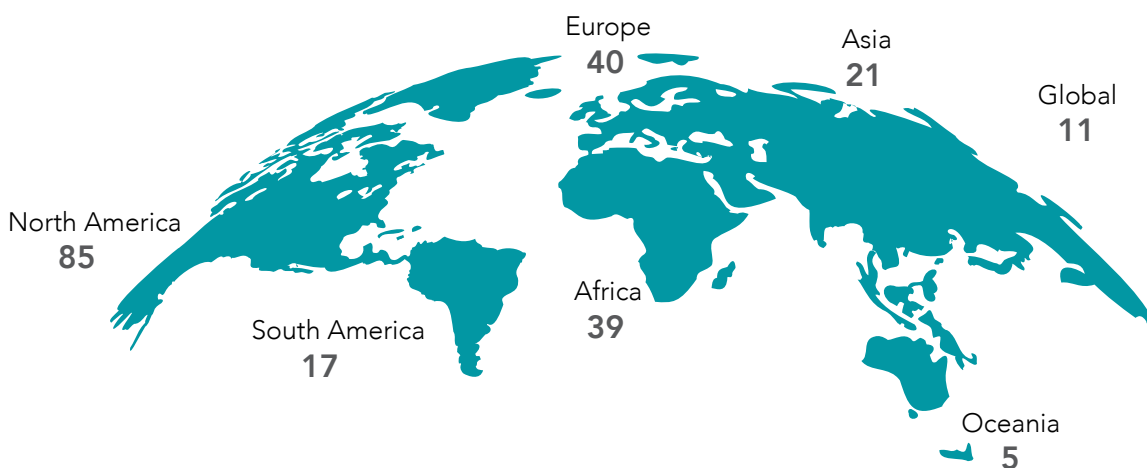
A huge number of prevention programmes exist, but there are still few well-evidenced programmes in the Global South:

We profiled 303 programmes, of which 218 were school based, but we could have added many more. The African Child Information Hub identifies 777 organisations working on child rights in Africa alone. Alford & Derzon (2013) identified 691 violence-prevention programmes in the United States alone. Gottfredson & Gottfredson (2001)'s survey of US schools suggested each one implemented an average of 14 anti-bullying programmes. No review could be completely

comprehensive, and we can only hope to have unearthed many of the most interesting case studies out there. As we discuss below, a large proportion of the available programmes, and the available evidence, is concentrated in the Global North, and especially in the United States.

Most documented programmes are based in the Global North, and few are attuned to resource-poor environments: of the 218 school-based programmes a majority - 57% - are in North America or Europe. 39 programmes were identified in

Africa, 21 in Asia and 17 in South America. There are probably relatively fewer programmes in developing countries, and developing country programmes are less likely to be documented or evidenced. The bulk of the evidence is therefore WEIRD - drawn from populations that are Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic, with too little data on other contexts. There is also too little usable data on children with disabilities or discussing other often-overlooked groups. Even those studies which examine populations in the Global South are usually led by researchers from the Global North (Know Violence, 2017).



Programmes often focus on education and skills for children and pupils, and on peer violence:

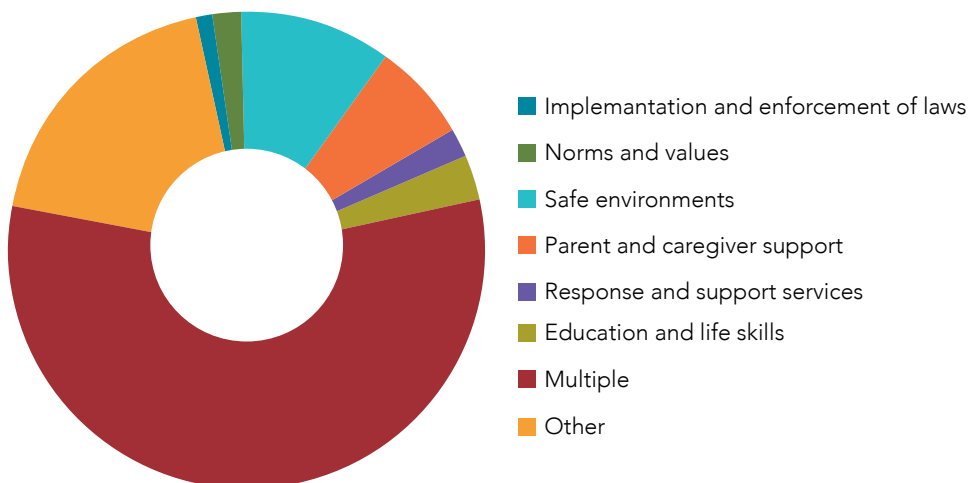
Fully 58% of identified programmes focus on education and skills,¹ and 61% are directed at children or pupils. Within the category of education and life skills, there are three main types of communication: knowledge of social issues (especially gender), controlling aggression (to counter bullying), and self-protective skills (especially to counter sexual abuse). Many

fewer programmes focus on the norms, laws, environments, services, resources and caregivers that may determine outcomes for children. Neither do many programmes take as their main target audience teachers, adults and parents, the whole school, the wider community or policymakers. That is especially important, since adult-child violence is an especially important category in developing countries, and because programmes are often not targeting those with the power to enact change. There is important geographical variation

in these strategies and target audiences. North America has an especially strong focus on education and life skills, with 64 out of 85 of programmes on that continent pursuing that approach - compared to 24/40 in the next highest continent, Europe, and just 13/39 of profiled African programmes. North America is similarly likely to focus on children and pupils: 63/85 of profiled programmes do so. So too is Asia (15/21) and Europe (25/40). By comparison, just 11/39 African programmes focus on children and pupils.

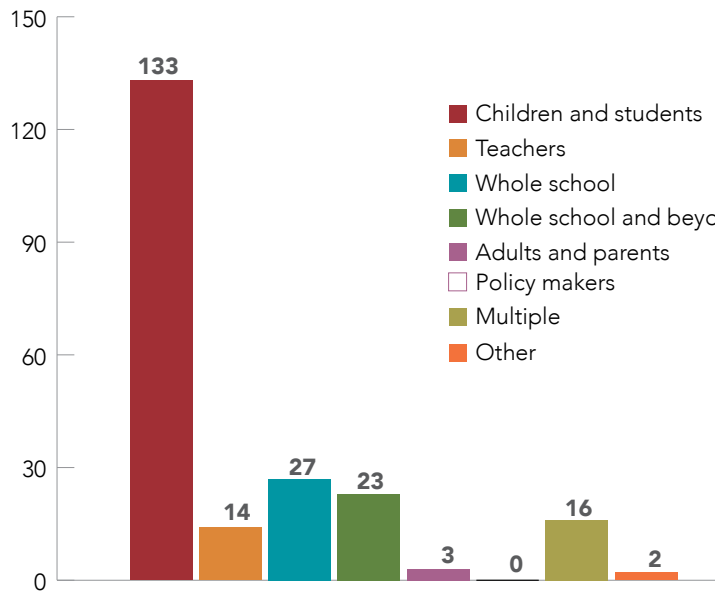
¹ In this categorisation we follow the WHO's seven INSPIRE strategies for ending violence against children. INSPIRE aims to cover all programmes to prevent violence against children, not just those that focus on schools.

Programmes by INSPIRE 7 Strategies





Programmes by target audience



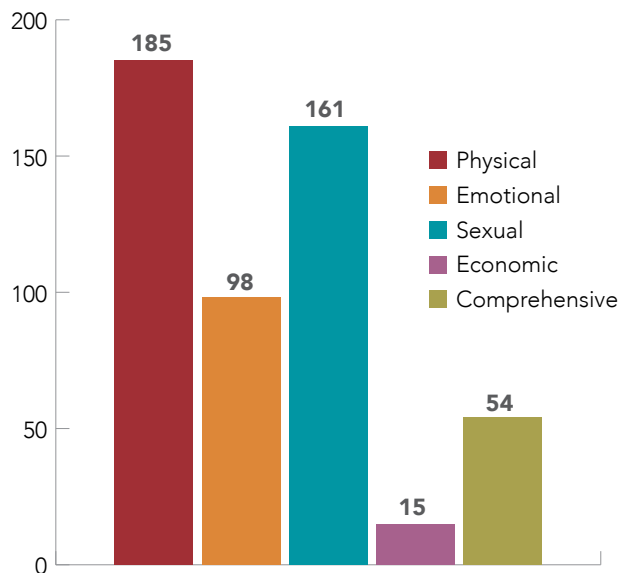
Anti-bullying programmes are much more common than comprehensive programmes, and hardly any focus on economic violence:

Raising Voices' definition of violence encompasses four types: physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence. Of the 218 school-based programmes

that were profiled, 85% of programmes included a focus on physical violence. 74% included a focus on sexual violence, while 45% included a focus on emotional violence. Just 7% attempted to redress economic violence against children. 25% of the programmes targeted 3 or more types of violence, and these we have termed

comprehensive. In the literature, a lot of attention is paid to peer violence, and especially bullying, yet in the Global South adult to child violence is one of the most serious issues. For instance, just 3% of profiled programmes focus on corporal punishment, even though this is a major source of the physical violence faced by children in schools.

Programmes by type of violence





Approaches and priorities have varied by place, even within the Global South:

Jones et al (2008) suggest that African violence prevention programmes have been led by individual NGOs focused on awareness raising with children, awareness raising with teachers, and involving multiple stakeholders, often using a rights frame, and often supported by national legislation. South American programmes, they suggest, have combined similar training with children and teachers with

participation of children in school governance, the promotion of youth associations, and the development of development of resource centres and hotlines, with all of this often discussed through the paradigm of peacebuilding amid violent societies. Asian programmes, Jones et al argued in 2008, have been rarer overall, but they note that child-led political movements have played an important role. Different places have also prioritised different types of violence: South American programmes

focus especially on physical and emotional violence, while African programmes have a strong focus on sexual violence and on corporal punishment. North American and European programmes tend to focus on peer violence and bullying. There are many North American and European programmes to prevent child sexual abuse, but few on other types of violence by adults against children. In this regard our evidence echoes that of the RTI International study (2016).



Common features of successful programmes

Examining the programmes of major interest listed above, and wider evidence from meta-analyses, a number of tentative conclusions emerge about common principles and theories of change. We conclude that programmes should:

Improve schools' operational culture and take a whole-school approach, to improve school climate.

Create meaningful roles and spaces for children to speak, to intervene, and to shape interventions.

Provide training and support to teachers, from peers, management, unions and specialists.

Go beyond the school to include parents and local officials.

Focus on long term implementation and collect data.

Adapt to local contexts and available resources.

Where resources are available, there is fairly good evidence for the effectiveness of other approaches, including mentoring and parenting support.



Research process

The following conclusions come from a synthesis of the following sources:

- several recent meta-analyses, systematic reviews and agendas, including Naker, 2017; Bradshaw, 2015; Stanley et al, 2012; Alvarado et al, 2017; Know Violence, 2017; WHO, 2016
- the features of the demonstratedly effective programmes described above in the section 'Programmes of major interest'
- Raising Voices' 15 years of experience in VACiS

Improve schools' operational culture and take a whole-school approach, to improve school climate: Meta-analyses and successful case studies continually advocate for a whole-school and holistic approach which uses multiple components and operates at multiple levels to change a school's culture, rather than directly addressing a single type of violence or a single cause of violence (Naker, 2017; Bradshaw, 2015; Stanley et al, 2012; Alvarado et al, 2017;

Know Violence, 2017; WHO, 2016). Thapa et al (2013) detail the ways in which a positive school climate can improve safety, healthy relationships, engaged learning and teaching, and school improvement efforts. Their review suggests that school climate delivers less physical, sexual and emotional violence, as well as better mental health, lower substance abuse, lower absenteeism, fewer suspensions and greater feelings of safety among teachers (see also,

Johnson, 2009). To change that overall ecology, one of the best entry points is to change a school's operational culture (Naker, 2017), by altering relational, psychological and structural factors (Moos, 1979). All this will mean going beyond education and skills approaches, and not just targeting children, but embracing multiple INSPIRE strategies and target audiences at once.

The Good Schools Toolkit, Learn Without Fear Malawi and SEHER are all particularly good examples of successful programmes employing this.

Provide training and support to teachers, from peers, management, unions and specialists: Teachers are of course a vital channel for programmes to prevent violence against children in schools. However, they are

often overburdened, and many programmes call for a lot of extra work. Teachers are themselves often perpetrators or enablers of violence. Teachers need training (Stanley et al, 2012), especially in alternatives to current bad practices. Teachers also need support from senior school

management (Bradshaw, 2015), from specialists (Stanley et al, 2012; Shinde et al, 2018) and from their professional peers and unions (UNGEI et al, 2018) to sustain an intervention, ensure it is implemented with fidelity, and to ensure consistency across a school.

The Seher Mitra intervention which involved another staff member far outperformed the equivalent intervention which simply gave the same duties to a teacher. The Irie Classroom Toolbox provides ongoing support to teachers. The Classroom Assistant Programme is focused entirely on providing an extra member of staff. In supporting the Good School Toolkit, Raising Voices runs a Peer Learning Network.



Create meaningful roles and spaces for children to speak, to intervene, and to shape interventions:

Raising up children’s voices and giving them meaningful roles is valuable in itself (Naker, 2017), but it also has the potential to reduce violence. Stanley et al (2012) offer qualitative evidence that peer intervention in schools can be an important prophylactic against domestic violence. Alvarado et al and Know Violence (both 2017) conclude in their reviews that giving young people agency and allowing them to make a contribution reduces violence.

Bystander-focused bullying approaches that charge students with the role of intervening seem to reduce bullying on average 20%, with stronger effects with older students (Bradshaw, 2015; see also Keller, 2007). School clubs for children have been used both to explicitly design changes to school culture, and simply to provide a space away from violence; both mixed- and single-sex clubs have been a major element of several demonstrated effective interventions (see for instance Shinde et al, 2018; Paluck et al, 2016). Leach et al

(2013) attributes considerable success to girls clubs in several interventions, when teachers are committed and resources are available: in the SVAGS intervention in Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique, participants in the girls clubs were attested as being more knowledgeable, more confident, having better relationships and being better able to report and challenge violence. A method has been developed for identifying those students whose involvement may have the greatest impact on school climate (Paluck et al, 2016).

Virtually all of the programmes listed above do something like this, but KiVa, Soul Buddyz Club and Changing Climates of Conflict may be particularly good examples.

Go beyond the school to include parents and local officials: Violence against children in schools is a

social and systemic problem which requires interventions that involve those outside the school (Naker, 2017; Alvarado et al, 2017; Know

Violence, 2017). Parent training (Bradshaw, 2015) or media campaigns can have great impact (Stanley et al, 2012). Engaging with schools always also means working with school and state authorities (Know Violence, 2017). National change is necessary, but many transnational initiatives

already exist to advocate for policy change, including the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, UNICEF’s Global Partnership to End SRGBV and the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (see also UNICEF et al, 2018).

Learn without Fear Malawi, Promoting Safe, Child Friendly Schools, Stop Violence Against Girls in Schools and Incredible Years are all examples of successful programmes that invest heavily in community engagement beyond the school.





Focus on long term implementation and collect data:

Many programmes perform well when initially deployed in carefully implemented and monitored trials, but then perform less well later

on, because they are not implemented with fidelity, especially when they are scaled up (Smith et al, 2004; Bradshaw, 2015). Yet long term programmes seem to have much greater impact (Stanley et al, 2012). If they are to remain effective for

the long term, programmes need to be selected based on a clear theory of change and good evidence (Know Violence, 2017; Naker, 2017), and then monitored for fidelity through regular data collection.

Olweus, SWPBIS and KiVa are all examples of programmes that have been shown to be consistently effective over longer time periods, and which include data collection as part of their activities.

Adapt to local contexts and available resources:

There is no single template for successful violence prevention. Effective programmes are adapted to the local context and resources available (Stanley et al, 2012). That positions them well to grow, because they have

adaptability and feasibility inbuilt from the start. Even transferring programmes within the developed world may not succeed; the Olweus programme performs better in Europe than in the US (Bradshaw, 2015). There remains a dearth of evidence of what works in non-

Western contexts. In the same vein, specific audiences - both perpetrators of violence and potential victims of it - will require tailored messages and actions, including direct combatting of the discriminatory norms that are at the heart of much violence (Know Violence, 2017).

Adaptation to the environment and available resources is a core element of the Good School Toolkit, while the Good Behaviour Game is a useful example of resource-light effective intervention.

Where resources are available, there is fairly good evidence for the effectiveness of other approaches, including mentoring and parenting support:

There is strong evidence for the short term impacts of mentoring programmes for at-risk youth. More than 5000 programmes have been identified in the USA alone, involving more than 3

million people. They are quite expensive, but they seem to have an average impact of about 20% when it comes to reducing conduct problems, and between 10 and 20% when it comes to improving social/relational and psychological/emotional outcomes (DuBois et al, 2011; see also Rhodes & Lowe, 2008 for a discussion of which mentoring programmes do and do not succeed). Parenting support

programmes that improve maternal psychosocial health and change parental perceptions of discipline seem to reduce child maltreatment, at least for at-risk groups (Know Violence, 2017). There is moderate evidence that school-based child sexual abuse programmes can increase knowledge and self-protection skills, but no convincing evidence that this actually reduces child sexual abuse (Walsh et al, 2018).

These are not the approaches employed by the school-based programmes listed as examples above, but similar strategies can be observed within Parivartan or in Plan's Promoting Safe, Child Friendly Schools programme.





Gaps and opportunities

There is lots more to do; violence against children in schools remains incredibly common, and 68 countries permit at least some corporal punishment in schools (Global Initiative, 2019). VACiS may fall between sectors, and lack clear funding lines. Yet examples of promising and proven practice exist around the world, including from developing countries. In the preceding section, we identified

some of the lessons of those; these should be refined, shared and communicated. It is for that reason that we believe a consultative group is the way forward. Those programmes should be expanded and sustained, of course, but we need to go beyond even that. In developing an agenda for further progress, that group may wish to consider the following opportunities:

- Address systems, and engage with those that have the power to effect change.
- Learn how to scale and sustain.
- Learn how to adapt for the developing world.
- Focus on cost-benefit analysis.
- Gain a deeper understanding of processes of violence commission and prevention.
- Raise up children's voices and advance children's rights.

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Address systems, and engage with those that have the power to effect change.

The overwhelming majority of efforts to prevent violence against children do so by training children, in the hope of preventing individual acts of violence. Too few focus on teachers and adults - as our evidence above suggests. Indeed, too few take in the wider system and society in which a school exists. We know it is important to involve the community, but in many programmes it remains an afterthought, because doing so is hard - one of many lessons from the progress of Twaweza's Uwezo project. Most programmes recommend

additional 'indicated actions' and response services to deal directly with perpetrators of violence, but these are rarely implemented (Bradshaw, 2015). Yet when programmes target school culture, and include those who are most likely to commit violence, they perform better. We need to understand the pressures and norms of those audiences, and identify effective channels and messages. We need to do so in ways that take account of context and cost-effectiveness.

Learn how to scale and sustain.

Many programmes succeed in the controlled environment of an experimental evaluation. The effort to develop the shortlist of programmes



that succeed has been the great research success of the past decade. Yet those effects may not last beyond the trial, and programmes may not deliver the same results at scale. Equipped with our list of programmes that we know can work, the next phase is to draw on the lessons of implementation research to sustain those gains with the resources available. That will mean a shift in the kind of research that we do: from measuring efficacy in the right conditions to measuring effectiveness in the real world (Weiss et al, 2009). We have models of measuring violence prevention at scale - it can be done (Karna et al, 2011b; Waasdorp et al, 2012).

Learn how to adapt for the developing world.

Violence prevention in the developing world is a very different task to that in the rich world. Resources are scarce, institutions are weaker, adults are less closely monitored, and social norms differ. In particular, we need to know how programmes and ideas travel. We know, for instance, that the Olweus programme performs better in Europe than in the US (Bradshaw, 2015), but we don't know why. That is because our research at the moment does not tell us enough about the mediators and moderators of impact (Ttofi et al, 2014; Know Violence, 2017). The bulk of programmes will continue to emerge from the rich world, and we urgently need guidelines on how those are to be adapted and developed for the diverse contexts of the developing world (Baumann et al, 2015). Programmes like Parivartan (Das et al, 2012) and the Irie Classroom Toolbox (Baker-Henningham & Walker,

2018) are successful adaptations. There may be particular places that require especial focus: progress in South Asia in recent years has been striking, and there may be more momentum here, while South America may require especial support to institute similar programmes at scale.

Focus on cost-benefit analysis.

In adapting those projects, we need to think harder about resources and cost-benefit analysis. Of the 53 programmes assessed in Ttofi & Farrington's 2011 review, just one contains a cost benefit analysis. The Good School Toolkit is a rare example of a programme whose costs and benefits have been assessed (Greco et al, 2018). Many programmes are privately licensed and well beyond the budgets of many developing country schools (Know Violence, 2017). Many programmes default to using training - a relatively slow, expensive and patchily successful type of communication (Leach et al, 2013). In understanding the mediators and moderators of violence, we will gain a better understanding of which elements of programmes are vital, and which can be sacrificed. In Chile, Gaete and colleagues are trialling KiVa both with and without the technology element. We can do more of that, as well as opening up new sources of funding by putting this work on the violence prevention agenda.

Gain a deeper understanding of processes of violence commission and prevention.

More can still be done to understand the detailed psychological processes of how people come to commit

violence, how they come to be victimised, and how they come to intervene. For instance, we know poor mental health and violence are mutually reinforcing, but we have little information on which precedes the other and how such cycles get started - and we do not have a good vocabulary for discussing it with children or those who are unfamiliar with mental health challenges. When it comes to peer violence, we could learn still more about the predictors of polyvictimisation, in a wider variety of cultural contexts. We know bystander intervention is important (Kärnä et al, 2011), and there is a large literature on when people act in other situations - but we do not know how teachers or pupils become agents of cultural change in their schools.

Raise up children's voices and advance children's rights.

Finally, there is always a need for the wider supporting activism that propels this work. Children are still regarded as "semi-rights holders" (Naker, 2017) in most of the world, and many find continued justifications for violence against them. Children's voices are still rarely heard. Even as we forge ahead, we need to do more to hear those voices, and to ensure others recognise the full measure of humanity in every child. To give one example of a concrete way to do this: we have a lot of research now on prevalence of violence, but that literature uses adult-led definitions of violence - children request a greater emphasis on the emotion, environment and relationship, rather than on specific physical acts (Naker, 2005), and this could be incorporated into our research.

